

Message Text

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E.O.: 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, NI

SUBJ: LAGOS DOCK STRIKE ENDS

REF: LAGOS 0335

SUMMARY: LAGOS DOCKS RETURNED TO NORMAL JANUARY 12 FOLLOWING SETTLEMENT OF THREE-DAY STRIKE. NIGERIA PORTS AUTHORITY AND PRIVATE CONTRACTORS EMPLOYING DOCKWORKERS AGREED PAY DOCKWORKERS UDOJI SALARY SCALES PLUS ARREARS. SETTLEMENT STRENGTHENS REBEL UNION LEADER ODULANA'S CLAIM TO DOCK UNION LEADERSHIP AND PERHAPS MORE SIGNIFICANTLY INDICATES FMG IS NOT PREPARED TO CONFRONT UNIONS IN KEY INDUSTRIES OVER UDOJI. END SUMMARY.

1. WORK ON LAGOS DOCKS RETURNED TO NORMAL CONGESTED PATTERN JANUARY 12 AFTER THREE-DAY INDUSTRIAL DISPUTE ENDED LATE JANUARY 11. NIGERIA PORTS AUTHORITY, AFTER MEETING CONTRACTORS WHO EMPLOY DOCKWORKERS, AGREED DOCKWORKERS WOULD BE PAID WAGES ESTABLISHED IN FMG WHITE PAPER ON UDOJI REPORT. WORKERS WILL ALSO RECEIVE SAME BACK-WAGES BEING PAID PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEES, BUT ON DIFFERENT PAYMENT SCHEDULE, I.E., FIFTY PERCENT OF ARREARS

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AT END OF JANUARY AND FIFTY PERCENT IN MID-FEBRUARY.

2. COMMENT: SETTLEMENT IS SIGNIFICANT VICTORY FOR LEFT-WING UNION LEADER ODULANA, WHO USED PRESENT NATION-WIDE CONCERN OVER GROWING CONGESTION IN PORT AND EMOTIONS GENERATED BY UDOJI REPORT TO VERY GOOD ADVANTAGE IN BACKING NPA AND MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT INTO A CORNER. VICTORY WILL MAKE IT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT, IF NOT IMPOSSIBLE, FOR MODERATE UNION LEADERS SUPPORTED BY FMG MINISTRY OF LABOUR TO MAKE ANY REALISTIC CLAIM TO LEADERSHIP IN DOCK UNION.

3. PERHAPS MORE IMPORTANTLY, EASE WITH WHICH NPA CAPITULATED TO UNION ON UDOJI WAGE ISSUE IS CERTAIN TO BE NOTICED BY OTHER UNION LEADERS AND SPUR THEM TO ACT MORE QUICKLY IN OBTAINING WAGE INCREASES FOR THEIR MEMBERS. DOCK SITUATION IS PERHAPS UNIQUE IN THAT ONLY A STRONG SHOW OF FORCE BY MILITARY MIGHT HAVE BROKEN WORKERS' RESOLVE, AND NEED TO CLEAR PORT CONGESTION MILITATED AGAINST SUCH ACTION AT THIS TIME. FMG MIGHT NOT FIND IT SO DIFFICULT TO ACT STRONGLY AGAINST INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES IN LESS VITAL INDUSTRIES, BUT DOCK UNION VICTORY DOES SET AN EXAMPLE.
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